



**National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior**

**Valley Forge National
Historical Park**

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**Superintendent's
Compendium
Of Designations, Closures,
Permit Requirements and Other
Restrictions Imposed Under
Discretionary Authority.**

Approved:

Date: 1/31/2011

Michael A. Caldwell,
Superintendent

In accordance with regulations and the delegated authority provided in Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations ("36 CFR"), Chapter 1, Parts 1-7, authorized by Title 16 United States Code, Section 3, the following provisions apply to all lands and waters administered by the National Park Service, within the boundaries of Valley Forge National Historical Park. Unless otherwise stated, these regulatory provisions apply in addition to the requirements contained in 36 CFR, Chapter 1, Parts 1-7.

Written determinations, which explain the reasoning behind the Superintendent's use of discretionary authority, as required by Section 1.5(c), appear in this document identified by italicized print.

**I. 36 CFR §1.5(a)(1) - VISITING HOURS, PUBLIC USE LIMITS, CLOSURES AND
AREA DESIGNATIONS FOR SPECIFIC USE OR ACTIVITIES**

(a)(1) The following visiting hours and public use limits are established for all or for the listed portions of the park, and the following closures are established for all or a portion of the park to all public use or to a certain activity:

Visiting Hours

- The Valley Forge Visitor Center is open from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm 7 days a week. The Visitor Center is open until 6:00 pm from Memorial Day through Labor Day.
- The Washington's Headquarters building is open daily from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, March through December. It is closed for the month of January and open weekends in February.
- The park library is available for use by appointment only.
- All park buildings are closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day.

- The park may close due to inclement weather. The public will be notified through public media.

Park buildings are open based upon personnel availability.

Park Grounds, unless otherwise designated, should be considered as a **Day Use Area**, open from 7:00 am until dark.

Exceptions:

The **Chapel Lot** will be open at 6 am.

State-owned roadways: Route 252, Gulph Road, County Line Road and Route 23 are exempt from this closure.

These conditions are established to provide operational efficiency for the management of these areas.

Public Use Limits

- The maximum number of occupants permitted in the park Theater (formerly known as the Auditorium) is 295.
- The maximum number of occupants permitted in the lower level of the Visitor Center is 533.
- The maximum number of occupants permitted in the Education Center is 130. If the Center is set up with tables and chairs, the maximum occupancy is 60. If the main room of the Education Center is divided into Room A and Room B, each of those rooms has a maximum capacity of 65 occupants. If those rooms are set up with tables and chairs, the maximum occupancy is 31.

The maximum occupancies for the buildings listed above were determined by the fire marshals office and are in place for reasons of life safety.

- The use of some vehicles which are used to enhance the mobility of physically impaired visitors may be verbally approved for temporary use by a park ranger.

This is to provide better accessibility to the visitors of Valley Forge National Historical Park.

Closures

The following locations are closed to the general public access or use:

- Wayne's Woods Area

This area is located on South Outer Line Drive and is fenced and marked with signage. The area has received heavy visitor use and has exceeded its carrying capacity. The resource has received heavy damage. The area is closed to allow the resource to rest and be reclaimed.

- Varnum's Picnic Area and restrooms are closed from November 1 to March 1.

During the winter months there is little to no visitor activity in this area. Due to the lack of use during the winter months, and to promote the efficient operation of the park, this area is closed between the above dates.

- The Joseph Plumb Martin Trail (a multi-use trail on the south side of the park) and the Schuylkill River Trail (on the north side of the park) are closed to motor vehicles with the exception of emergency and/or authorized vehicles.

These closures are in place for visitor safety.

- All areas designated as the "Asbestos Areas of Concern". These locations are fenced and signs posted. See attached map.

Exposure to asbestos can be hazardous to human health. The park has closed these areas to limit any possible exposure.

- Catfish Island, located on the Schuylkill River between the 422 Bridge and Pawlings Road Bridge, is closed between March 15 and June 1.

Canadian Geese and Herons are nesting on the Island during this period. Human activity will disrupt their nesting habits which could be fatal to their survival.

- The areas of the park located south of the Schuylkill River are closed to organized recreational activities such as races, "a-thons", fundraisers, athletic or sporting events, shows or exhibitions, with the exception of one park-sponsored race known as the Revolutionary Run, to be held annually as part of National Park Week.

In general, the park does not have the capacity to host large events based on the south side of the park. Heavy visitor and vehicle use makes managing events in a manner that is safe and resource friendly difficult. However, in an effort to reach out to the local community, the park has agreed to hold one large event based on the south side of the park in connection with National Park Week.

- All quarry areas located within the park are closed to the public.

Limited Use Area:

- **Varnum's Picnic Area** parking lot opens at 7 AM and closes at dark between March 1 and October 31. The public restroom at Varnum's will be opened for special permits and weekends only during this time period.

36 CFR 1.5(a) 2: The following activities are not permitted.

Model Rockets:

- All areas of the park are closed to the launching of model rockets.

The propellant used to launch model rockets has caused wildland fires in the park. Falling rockets cause unsafe hazards to visitors using the park. The park is also not geared for the safe launching and recovery of these items. Falling rockets are a hazard to visitors who are not aware of the event.

Kite Skiing:

- All areas of the park are closed to Kite Skiing.

Due to the nature of the activity, a very large kite (para-sail) is very distracting to the visitor experience of an 18th Century Encampment Area.

Segways:

- **Electric Personal Assistive Mobility Devices (EPAMD)**
Segways and other brands of EPAMD are considered motor vehicles as defined under 36 CFR § 1.4. Therefore, pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a), 4.10(a) the **Park will not allow the recreational** use of Segways and other EPAMD within the park including sidewalks, trails and roadways.

Boating in Valley Creek:

The creek is shallow and difficult to navigate in certain locations. A dam, low hanging covered bridge and water level gauges on the creek make navigation dangerous.

The following areas have been designated for a specific use or activity, under the conditions and/or restrictions as noted:

Motorized Toys:

- The use of model airplanes is restricted to the field (known as the Airplane Field) located on Valley Creek Road.
- All persons using this area for model airplane flight are required to display a membership tag from Valley Forge Signal Seekers or obtain a day use pass from a member of the Valley Forge Signal Seekers. Day use passes will only be available when a member of the Valley Forge Signal Seekers is present at the field and can confirm the requirements of field use are met by signing and issuing the day pass. The one-day flight permit is valid only for the day it is issued. Safety rules to govern the daily use of the airplane field have been developed in cooperation with Valley Forge Signal Seekers and have been adopted as regulation for Valley Forge National Historical Park. This regulation document and the AMA National Model Aircraft Safety code will be posted in the bulletin board located at the field. See attachment.
- Model airplanes are prohibited from flying over the roads or parking areas surrounding the field.

Boat Launching:

- Boats may be launched into the Schuylkill River from the Betzwood Boat Ramp area located on the north side of the park.

The Betzwood Boat Ramp is designated for boat launching since there is a ramp available for boat trailers and there is trailer parking available at that site.

Picnicking:

- The following areas of the park are closed to picnicking:

Any area within 100 feet of historic zones (Muhlenberg Brigade soldier huts, Washington's Headquarters, Varnum's Quarters, Huntington's Quarters)

This closure is in place to assure that visitors to the historic zones are not distracted by activities that could detract from the visitor's appreciation of the historic scene.

II. 36 CFR §1.6 – PERMITS

(f) The following is a compilation of activities and/or public uses for which a permit from the superintendent or is required:

- §1.5(d) To implement a public-use limit, the superintendent may establish a permit, registration or reservation system. Permits shall be issued in accordance with the criteria and procedures of §1.6 of this chapter.
- A permit will be required for all "organized" equestrian, cycling or running club events which occur on park trails consisting of 20 or more participants.
- The scattering of human ashes may occur by permit only. The request will stipulate time, place, number of participants, use of park facilities, and any other special considerations requested.
- §2.4(d) Carry or possess a trap or net.
- §2.5(a) Specimen collection (take plant, fish, wildlife, rocks or minerals).
- §2.10(a) The following camping activities:
Camping is generally prohibited with the exception of limited special events held by the Boy and Girl Scouts of America. These events are held under a special use permit.
- §2.12 Audio Disturbances:
(a)(3) Operation of any type of portable motor or engine, or device powered by a portable motor or engine
(a)(4) Operation of a public address system in connection with a public gathering or special event for which a permit has been issued pursuant to §2.50 or §2.51.
- §2.17 Aircraft and Air Delivery
(a)(3) Delivery or retrieval of a person or object by parachute, helicopter or other airborne means
(c)(1) Removal of a downed aircraft
- §2.37 Soliciting or demanding gifts, money goods or services (Pursuant to the terms and conditions of a permit issued under sections 2.50, 2.51, or 2.52)
- §2.38 Explosives:
(a) Use, possess, store, transport explosives, blasting agents
(b) Use or possess fireworks
- §2.50(a) Conduct a sports event, pageant, regatta, public spectator attraction, entertainment, ceremony, and similar events
- §2.51(a) Public assemblies, meetings, gatherings, demonstrations, parades and other public expressions of views. See attached maps.
- §2.52(c) Sale or distribution of printed matter that is not solely commercial advertising

- §2.62 – Memorialization

(b) A permit is required for the scattering of ashes from cremated human remains, or in the following designated areas without a permit, in accordance with the following terms and conditions:

- §4.11(a) Vehicles exceeding load, weight and size limits. (See section III, §4.10)
- §5.1 Advertisements (display, posting, or distribution)
- §5.3 Engaging in or soliciting any business (Requires a permit, contract or other written agreement with the United States, or must be pursuant to special regulations).
- §5.5 Commercial Photography/Filming:
Commercial filming of motion pictures or television involving the use of professional casts, settings or crews, other than bona fide newsreel or news television
(b) Still photography of vehicles, or other articles of commerce or models for the purpose of commercial advertising.
- §5.6(c) Use of commercial vehicles on park area roads (The superintendent shall issue a permit to access private lands within or adjacent to the park when access is otherwise not available).
- §5.7 Construction of buildings, facilities, trails, roads, boat docks, paths, structures, etc.

Parties interested in obtaining special use permits may learn more about permits and about how to obtain a permit application by visiting www.nps.gov/vafo. One may also call 610-783-1000 and choose option #4 for more information.

III. GENERAL REGULATIONS

36 CFR §2.1 – PRESERVATION OF NATURAL, CULTURAL, AND ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

(c)(1), (c)(2) Fruits, nuts, berries and/or mushrooms may be gathered by hand for personal use or consumption in accordance with the noted size, quantity, collection sites, and/or use or consumption restrictions:

- the quantity shall not exceed the daily use of the immediate family of the collector
- "gathering" is prohibited in the immediate vicinity of Washington's Headquarters and within 100 feet of any buildings and/or monuments.

The superintendent has determined that the gathering of small quantities of the above mentioned items will not adversely affect park resources.

36 CFR § 2.2 WILDLIFE PROTECTION

(d) The transporting of lawfully taken wildlife through the park is permitted under the following conditions and procedures:

- A law enforcement ranger must accompany the transportation of any lawfully taken animal.

(e) The following areas are closed to the viewing of wildlife with the use of an artificial light:

- All park areas are closed to spotlighting.

36 CFR § 2.3 FISHING

- **The Use of Live Bait is Prohibited in Valley Creek**

(d)(3) Chumming or placing preserved or fresh fish eggs, fish roe, food, fish parts, chemicals or other foreign substances in fresh waters for the purpose of feeding or attracting fish in order that they may be taken is prohibited.

There have been a plethora of issues surrounding the introduction and spread of non-native species to Valley Creek. Rusty crayfish are invasive crustaceans spreading to lakes, rivers, and streams in several areas of North America. They are more aggressive than other native crayfish, better able to avoid fish predation, and can harm native fish populations by eating their eggs and young. They can displace native crayfish, hybridize with them, and graze on and eliminate aquatic plants.

36 CFR §2.10 – CAMPING and FOOD STORAGE

- §2.10(a) Camping is only permitted at park sponsored events or by special use permit.

36 CFR §2.11 - PICNICKING

Certain areas have been closed to picnicking and are listed in section 1.5(a)(1), "Closures".

Conditions for Picnicking:

- Trash must be disposed of properly and packed out when no trash receptacles are available.
- Picnicking is on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Grills are provided only at the Betzwood Picnic Area.
- Groups larger than 20 people are encouraged to use a "designated picnic area" – Varnum's Picnic Area, Wayne's Woods, or Betzwood.

36 CFR 2.13 – FIRES

(a)(1) The lighting or maintaining of fires is generally prohibited, except as provided for in the following designated areas and/or receptacles, and under the conditions noted:

Designated Areas:

- Fires are permitted in grills, portable stoves, portable barbecues, within all picnic areas. Except as stated above, fires are prohibited in the park. Betzwood picnic area is the only area in the park with park-provided grills. All grill accoutrements must be packed out of the park by the user. This includes used charcoal and propane cook stove containers.

36 CFR §2.15 – PETS

(a)(2) Failing to crate, cage, restrain on a leash, or otherwise confine a pet at all times is prohibited.

(a)(5) Pet excrement must be disposed of in accordance with the following conditions:

- Owners or persons having custody or control of any animal(s) will immediately remove and dispose of excrement voided by an animal(s) under their control. Excrement will be properly disposed of in outdoor trash containers.

(e) Pets may be kept by park residents under the following conditions:

- Breeding operations shall not be conducted on park property.
- Wildlife shall not be kept in violation of state or federal law.
- The keeping of farm animals (which include but are not limited to: horses, burros, goats, or pot bellied pigs) is prohibited.
- Excessive noise or offensive conditions created by any pet are prohibited.

36 CFR §2.16 – HORSES and PACK ANIMALS

(b) The use of horses or pack animals is allowed on the following trails, routes or areas:

- Huntington's Trail
- River Trail
- Walnut Hill Trail
- Commissary Trail
- Chapel Trail
- Baptist Trace Road
- Valley Creek Trail
- Bridle Trail
- Mt Joy Trails
- Horseshoe Trail

The Joseph Plumb Martin Trail is a prohibited trail for horseback riding.

36 CFR § 2.20 - SKATING, SKATEBOARDS, and SIMILAR DEVICES

The use of roller skates, skateboards, roller skis, coasting vehicles, or similar devices are allowed only in the following areas:

- The Schuylkill River Trail
- Betzwood Parking area

36 CFR § 2.21 SMOKING

- Smoking is prohibited in all government buildings except single occupancy/single family park quarters. Smoking is prohibited in dormitory style housing.

The superintendent has determined that this restriction is necessary to protect park resources, protect employees and the public and reduce the risk of fire on government property. This measure is deemed to be the minimum necessary to achieve such protection.

36 CFR § 2.22 – PROPERTY

(a)(2) Property may be left unattended for periods longer than 24 hours in the following areas and under the following conditions:

- Vehicles or boat trailers, or combination, may be left unattended for periods up to 24 hours or longer, when parked in parking areas adjacent to the designated boat launching site, with written permission obtained in advance from the Superintendent.
- Any vehicle or boat trailer or combination left in parking areas adjacent to the designated boat launching site in excess of 48 hours, without written permission, obtained in advance from the superintendent, is prohibited, and may be impounded.

36 CFR § 2.35 –ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES and CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

(a)(3)(i) The following public use areas, portions of public use areas, and/or public facilities within the park are closed to consumption of alcoholic beverages, and/or to the possession of a bottle, can or other receptacle containing an alcoholic beverage that is open, or has been opened, or whose seal has been broken or the contents of which have been partially removed:

- All areas in the boundaries of Valley Forge National Historical Park are closed to alcoholic consumption with the exception of park residences and functions approved by the superintendent.

The park is close to highly populated areas and heavily traveled public roads traverse the park. For these reasons some users may come to the park for the sole purpose of consuming alcohol. The park staff has noticed that behavior induced by the consumption of alcohol by some persons may at times destroy the enjoyment of the park by others. This restriction is consistent with the Pennsylvania state park restriction on alcohol.

- The consumption of an alcoholic beverage by a person operating a vehicle or vessel is prohibited.

Boating is a potentially hazardous activity. Operators of vessels must devote full time and attention to boating. Alcohol impairment by boat operators directly affects safe boat operation, and alcohol impairment is a known factor in boating accidents, injuries and fatalities at Valley Forge NHP.

36 CFR §3.6 – BOATING OPERATIONS

(d)(1) Vessels may not create a wake or exceed 5 mph in the following areas:

- 100' from the boat ramp

(h) The following areas/sites are designated for the launching or recovery of vessels using a trailer:

- Betzwood boat ramp

(i) The following areas/sites are designated for the launching or recovery of vessels propelled by machinery:

- Betzwood boat ramp

36 CFR §3.20 – WATER SKIING

(a) The towing of persons by vessels is allowed in the following areas under the terms and conditions noted: Water skiing is permitted in the Schuylkill River under the conditions imposed by this section and as permitted by state regulations regarding no wake areas.

36 CFR §3.21 – SWIMMING AND BATHING

(a)(1) The following areas are closed to swimming and bathing:

- Valley Creek
- Schuylkill River within 200 feet of its confluence with Valley Creek
- Schuylkill River within 500 feet of the Betzwood boat launch ramp

36 CFR §4.10 – TRAVEL ON PARK ROADS AND ROUTES

(a) Park roads open for travel by motor vehicle are those indicated below, and/or as indicated in the following publication or document (attached hereto):

- All state through ways and tour roads are open for vehicle travel.
- All trails, maintenance roads, or fire breaks are not open to the public for vehicle travel.

36 CFR §4.11 – TRAVEL ON PARK ROADS AND ROUTES

(b)(1) Vehicle load, weight and size limits:

- Vehicles exceeding established state size limits require a permit issued by the superintendent, and appropriate state highway permits.
- The covered bridge is closed to all trucks and busses.

36 CFR §4.21 – SPEED LIMITS

(b) The following speed limits are established for the routes/roads indicated:

- North and South Outer Line Drive 25 mph
- East and West Inner Line Drive 25 mph
- North and South Inner Line Drive 25 mph
- State roads within the park are posted 35 mph with the exception of a small section of Rt. 252 (Valley Creek Road) which is posted at 40 mph

36 CFR § 4.30 BICYCLES

(a) The use of bicycle is prohibited except on park roads, in parking areas, and on routes designated for bicycle use.

The following additional routes have been designated for bicycle use:

- Chapel Trail
- Joseph Plumb Martin Trail
- Valley Creek Trail
- Walnut Hill Lane
- Schuylkill River Trail
- River Trail
- Baptist Trace Road